GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:27
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2007
TELEDENSITY IN RURAL AREAS
Sethi Shri Arjun Charan

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the percentage of teledensity in the rural areas of our country is very less inspite of the cutting edge technology hubs developed in the cities;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the specific steps taken for providing better telecom services in the rural areas of the country during the last three years?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY(DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (c) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.27 FOR 13TH AUGUST, 2007 REGARDING TELEDENSITY IN RURAL AREAS.

(a)&(b) New Telecom Policy 1999 envisaged a target of 4% teledensity in rural areas by the year 2010. As against the same, the rural teledensity is 6.45% as on 30.06.2007.

(c) The steps taken during the last three years for providing better telecom services in the rural areas of the country include inter alia :-

(i) Support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for provisioning of Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) in all the 1685 net cost positive Short Distance Charging Areas (SDCAs).

(ii) USOF support for providing Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in 66,822 undisputed accessible and inhabited villages having population more than 100 by November 2007.

(iii) Large-scale deployment of WLL network in rural areas.

(iv) Relaxation of norms by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) for laying cable upto 5 Kms of exchanges against the earlier standard of 2.5 Kms based on demand and techno-commercial consideration.

(v) Deployment of Mobile Network in all the Highways to give incidental coverage to large parts of rural areas.

(vi) Support from USOF for the innovative scheme of sharing of infrastructure by USO Fund to set up 7871 number of infrastructure sites (towers) spread over 500 districts in the country.